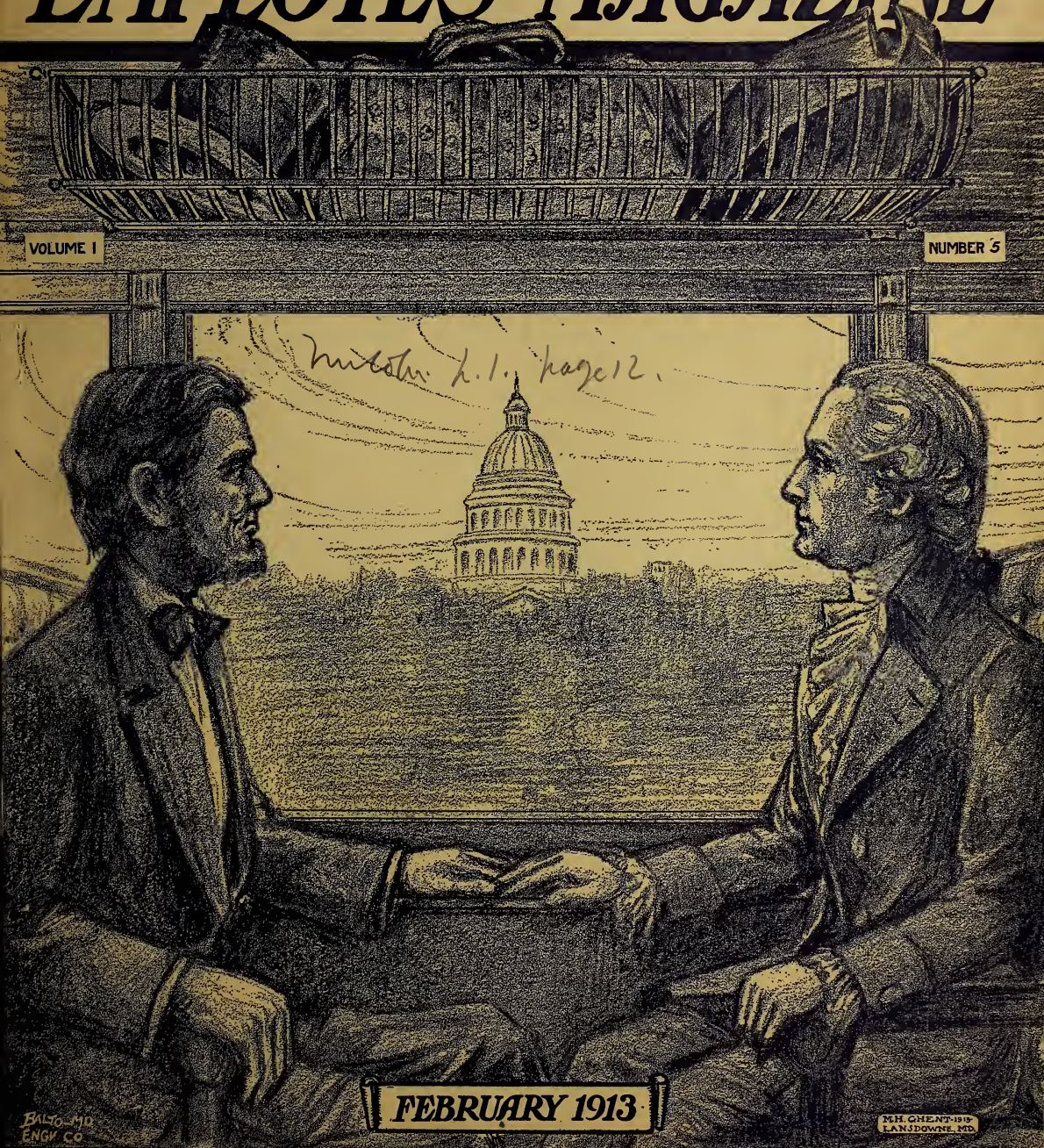


# BALTIMORE & OHIO EMPLOYEES MAGAZINE

VOLUME I

NUMBER 5

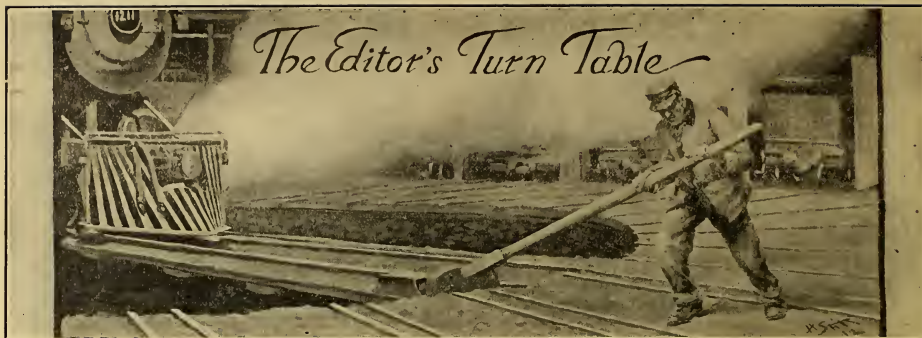


FEBRUARY 1913

M. G. H. 1913  
LAWSON, MD.

BALTO. MD.  
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## BALTIMORE AND OHIO EMPLOYEES MAGAZINE

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### ADVERTISING RATES.

\$80.00 per page, each insertion; 20 cents per agate line (fourteen agate lines to an inch). Width of column 16 ems or 2 3/4 inches. Advertising pages are measured on a three-column basis, \$28.60 per column of 143 lines.

The only discount allowed is for a full page, which, on the basis of 20 cents a line for 429 lines, would be \$85.80, the price asked being \$80.00. These rates are very low the bona fide circulation and will probably be increased later.

An extra charge is made for preferred position, such as the cover; rates for which will be supplied on request.

## WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

The man Lincoln interests us far more than his outer appearance. Yet after reading endless descriptions of him as a rough backwoodsman, it is well to remember the testimony of a woman who lived in Washington and had many opportunities for observing the president.

"I have never seen him without clean linen and well-kept hands," she writes.

But the spirit of a gentleman that animated him is better shown in his consideration for others. He would count over with his own hand the back pay of a poor government employe who could not go to the bureau

for it himself. He spent hours and days visiting hospitals, taking pains to suggest the planting of flowers about one of them to cheer the eyes of convalescents. He would turn out for an old colored woman on a muddy crossing.

"I make it a rule of my life," he said, "that if people won't turn out for me, I'll turn out for them. *It saves collisions.*" Even the bitterest partisan abuse he let pass, for the most part, without comment. To one who remonstrated with him for not ordering the arrest of a disloyal editor, he said, with a smile:

"If you will take care of my friends, I will look after my enemies."

And to another who objected to the readiness with which he forgave offenses against himself he explained in legal phrase:

"I am in favor of short statutes of limitations."

This forbearance has by some been confused with weakness. It is nothing of the sort. In matters that involved great principles he could be firm as iron. As long as there was any hope of settling the slave question by paying the owners a fair price or by some scheme of gradual emancipation that would enable North and South to share a burden that was an inheritance from earlier generations, he withstood the pressure from the radicals. But when he became convinced that there was no other way to uphold his oath, he had as little regard for the conservatives. His eyes were always toward the future. He let Douglas win the senatorship by drawing him into a position that would and did defeat him for the presidency. He put forth his emancipation policy and lost heavily in the elections of '62; but he was justified in '64.

The success of Mr. Lincoln, so far as we can reduce it to simple terms, resulted from the harmonious action of intellect and will. The man that is all intellect and no will does nothing; the man that is all will and no intellect does the wrong thing. For Lincoln, no time was too long, no pains too great to pay for knowledge of the truth. And he realized that in order to make his mind a fit instrument of thought, he must study many things that did not bear directly on his work. As an expert woodsman he understood the necessity of sharpening his mental axe.

"When his own children began to go to school," says Leonard Swett, an intimate friend, "he studied with them. I have seen him myself, upon the circuit, with a geometry

or an astronomy or some book of the kind, working out propositions in moments of leisure or acquiring the information that is generally acquired in boyhood. He is the only man I have ever known to *bridge back* thoroughly in the matter of spelling."

Noah Brooks adds this testimony:

"He never heard any reference to anything that he did not understand, without asking for further information. He would take one of his boys' toys to pieces, find out how it was made, and put it together again."

"He searched his own mind and nature thoroughly," declared his law partner, "as I have often heard him say. He must analyze a sensation, an idea, and words, and run them back to their origin, history, purpose and destiny. He would stand in the street and analyze a machine. He would whittle things to a point and then count the numberless inclined planes and their pitch, making the point. Clocks, omnibuses and language, paddlewheels and idioms, never escaped his observation and analysis."

It didn't matter to Lincoln if the truth were found in the enemy's camp. In fact, "he habitually studied the opposite side of every disputed question, of every law case, of every political issue, more exhaustively, if possible, than his own side. He said that the results had been that in all his long practice at the bar, he had never once been surprised in court by the strength of his adversary's case." (Schuyler Colfax.)

And because he built on the foundation of truth, when he finally reached conclusions, the statement of them carried irresistible conviction.

"He's a dangerous man," cried an angry old political conservative, striding away from an open-air meeting, "A dangerous man! He makes you believe what he says in spite of yourself!"

He always preferred the strength of truth to that of arbitrary authority. He acted when the time came but he labored patiently to convince his fellow-citizens of the justice of his position. He seldom referred to himself as president. He would say, "Since I came to this place." He liked best to consider himself "the attorney for the people." Once, however, when he was following an unpopular course, he remarked to a Senator:

"I am not going to let my client manage the case against my judgment."

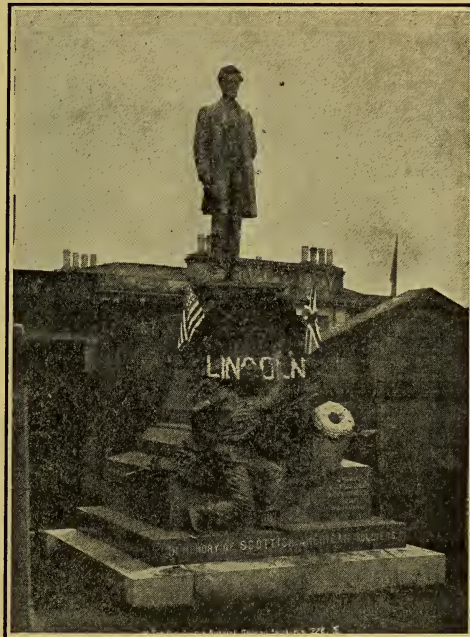
There is no final test of a man's strength like his honest recognition of his weakness. Lincoln frankly confessed that without the help of God he could not endure the great burden that rested on him. Many witnesses tell of finding him studying the Bible, specially in the early morning, before the rush of the day began. We heard General Sickles tell how, after Gettysburg, the president came to see him as he lay in hospital.

"Weren't you terribly anxious during the days of the battle?" asked the general.

"No," was the calm reply. When General Sickles expressed astonishment, Mr. Lincoln went on to tell how, long before the battle, he had realized the desperate situation. His anxiety became unendurable till finally he went into an empty room and fell on his knees. Then peace came.

When he was a young man, his inquiring mind led him to investigate the literature of skepticism. But he found

nothing solid there. It couldn't stand the test of life. After the death of his boy Willie he found an added appeal in the spiritual view of life. Mrs. Lincoln said that in his last words to her he was expressing a desire to visit the Holy Land. One of the few writers who have tried to deny the authenticity of Lincoln's faith explains that he made his many religious utterances to fool the people. And in the same book he praises him as *the most honest of men*. In studying biography the reader can often check up an author by his own words. And it is always well to balance one biographer against another. This is particularly true of the lives of Lincoln; for he showed a different side of his nature to almost every one that had dealings with him. Only after reading many accounts does one begin to get a glimpse of a coherent personality.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF A STATUE IN EDINBURG, SCOTLAND, SECURED BY E. L. BANGS, BALTIMORE

Less will be said here of Washington, not because he is less valued, but because the subject does not lend itself readily to a brief informal portrait. With all his great qualities, Washington had no such varied gifts of expression as Lincoln. There was little development of the art of publicity in his day. The Revolution produced no such flood of memoirs as the Civil War. The very popularity of Parson Weems' curious book shows the absence of any really satisfactory treatment of the subject. Yet from that same author of the cherry-tree story, Lincoln tells us, he got his first ideas of patriotism. Here is a passage to which he referred in a speech delivered on the way to Washington, just before his inauguration.

"For four months, during the summer and fall of 1776, the Americans were obliged to retreat before the enemy,



who completely over-ran the Jerseys, filling every town and hamlet with their victorious troops.

"They had been obliged to retreat from Long Island to New York, from New York, over the Hudson, to New Jersey, and now, over the Delaware, to Pennsylvania.

"My God, General Washington, how long shall we retreat?" said General Reed, "where shall we stop?"

"Why sir," replied Washington, "if we can do no better we'll retreat over every river in America; and last of all over the mountains, whence we shall never lack opportunities to annoy, and finally, I hope, to expel the enemies of our country."

"But, God be thanked. our toils and trials were not to be pushed to such sad extremities; for General Howe, having driven the Americans to the western side of the Delaware, stationed 4000 men in Trenton, Bordentown, and Burlington, on its eastern bank, and then returned with the main army to eat their winter pudding in Brunswick and New York. Here Washington, with joy, first discovered an opportunity to make a blow. Not doubting but that such a long run of success had taught the enemy to think very highly of themselves and as meanly of the Americans; and suspecting, too, that at Christmas, which was close at hand, instead of watching and praying like good Christians, they would, very likely, be drinking and hopping like fools, he determined then and there if possible to make a smash among them. To this end he broke his little remnant of an army into three divisions; two of which he committed to Generals Ewing and Cadwallader to attack at Bordentown and Burlington, the third he meant to lead in person to the heavier charge on Trenton. Everything being in readiness by Christmas night, as soon as it was dark they struck their tents and moved off in high spirits once more to try their fortune against a long victorious enemy. But alas! the enthusiasm of the gallant Cadwallader and Ewing was soon arrested; for on arriving at the river, they found it so filled with ice, as to preclude all possibility of crossing. Thus, to their inexpressible grief, was blasted the ardent wish to aid their beloved chief in this his last bold attempt to save America. Ignorant of the failure of two-thirds of his plan, Washington and his little forlorn hope, pressed on through the darkness night, pelted by an incessant storm of hail and snow. On approaching the river, nine miles above Trenton, they heard the unwelcome roar of ice, loud crashing along the angry flood. But the object before them was too vast to allow one thought about difficulties. The troops were instantly embarked, and after five hours of infinite toil and danger, landed, some of them frost-bitten, on the same shores with the enemy."

Because Washington is so lofty a figure, as far removed from our familiar thought, we think it well to emphasize a fact not often mentioned—his very human ability to laugh.

"More than one instance is told of Washington's being surprised into hearty fits of laughter, even during the war.

We have recorded one produced by the sudden appearance of old General Putnam on horseback with a female prisoner *en croup*. Another occurred at the camp at Morristown. Washington had purchased a young horse of great spirit and power. A braggadocio of the army. vain of his horsemanship, asked the privilege of breaking it. He was making a great display of his science, when the horse suddenly planted his forefeet, threw up his heels and gave the unlucky Gambado a somerset over his head. Washington, a thorough horseman, and quick to perceive the ludicrous in these matters, was so convulsed with laughter that we are told the tears ran down his cheeks.

"At the return of peace, when he was sailing in a boat on the Hudson, he was so overcome by the drollery of a story told by Major Fairlie of New York, of facetious memory, that he fell back in the boat in a paroxysm of laughter. In that fit of laughter, it was sagely presumed that he threw off the burthen of care which had been weighing down his spirits throughout the war.

"Colonel Henry Lee, too, who used to be a favored guest at Mount Vernon, does not seem to have been much under the influence of that 'reverential awe' which Washington is said to have inspired, if we may judge from the following anecdote. Washington one day at table mentioned his being in want of carriage horses, and asked Lee if he knew where he could get a pair.

"I have a fine pair," replied Lee, "but you cannot get them."

"Why not?"

"Because you will never pay more than half price for any thing; and I must have full price for my horses."

"The bantering reply set Mrs. Washington laughing, and her parrot, perched beside her, joined in the laugh. The general took this familiar assault upon his dignity in great good part. 'Ah, Lee, you are a funny fellow,' said he,—"see, that bird is laughing at you."

"Judge Marshall and Judge Washington, a relative of the general, were on their way on horseback to Mount Vernon, attended by a black servant, who had charge of a large portmanteau containing their clothes: As they passed through a wood on the skirts of the Mount Vernon grounds, they were tempted to make a hasty toilet beneath its shade, being covered with dust from the state of the roads. Dismounting, they threw off their dusty garments, while the servant took down the portmanteau.

"As he opened it, out flew cakes of windsor soap and fancy articles of all kinds. The man by mistake had changed their portmanteau at the last stopping place for one which resembled it, belonging to a Scotch pedlar. The consternation of the negro, and their own dismantled state, struck them so ludicrously as to produce loud and repeated bursts of laughter. Washington, who happened to be out upon his grounds, was attracted by the noise, and so overcome by the strange plight of his friends, and the whimsicality of the whole scene, that he is said to have actually rolled on the grass with laughter."

